DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 293 940 UD 026 123

TITLE	An Imperiled Generation: Saving Urban Schools.
INSTITUTION	Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Princeton, NJ.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-931050-33-2
PUB DATE	88
NOTE	78p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Princeton University Press, 3175 Princeton Pike, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648 ($7.50).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Compensatory Education; Curriculum Development; Disadvantaged Youth; Dropout Rate; Early Childhood Education; *Economically Disadvantaged; *Educational Facilities Improvement; *Educational Improvement; Educational Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; Equal Education; Family School Relationship; Federal Aid; Flexible Scheduling; Government Role; *Program Development; Program Proposals; School Community Relationship; School Size; Summer Programs; Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teacher Improvement; *Urban Education; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	Empowerment; Excellence in Education; Partnerships

ABSTRACT

Without good schools, none of America's hopes can be fulfilled. Since 1983, school reform has been at the top of the national agenda; however, there is a disturbing gap between rhetoric and results. After travelling to some of the nation's largest cities and interviewing administrators and teachers, Carnegie Foundation representatives determined the following priorities for improving urban schools: (1) affirm that every student can succeed; (2) build an effective governance arrangement for urban schools that ends excessively centralized, bureaucratic control; (3) introduce at every school a comprehensive system of renewal that emphasizes preschool and early education, breaks schools into smaller units, defines curricular goals, ensures flexible scheduling, and improves facilities; and (4) create a network of support beyond the school that empowers parents, and involves community, business and government participation. A new National Urban Schools Program is proposed which would: (1) incrementally increase funding of Head Start so that all eligible children are served by the year 2000; (2) increase the appropriation for federal child nutrition programs; (3) each year increase the funding for Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act by 5 percent; (4) add to the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act a provision enabling poor parents to place their children in afternoon and summer enrichment programs; (5) make summer fellowships available for teachers; (6) make available to school districts low interest loans to improve school facilities; (7) encourage schools to introduce new curriculum or scheduling arrangements; and (8) encourage cooperation between schools and postsecondary institutions. Data are presented in six tables. (BJV)

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An Imperiled Generation

SAVING URBAN SCHOOLS

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A CARNEGIE FOUNDATION SPECIAL REPORT

An Imperiled Generation

SAVING URBAN SCHOOLS

THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION FOR THE

ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING

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Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
Board of Trustees.
An imperiled generation.

1. Urban schools—United States. 2. School improvement program—United States. 3. Educational equalization—United States. I. Title.
LC5101.C37 1988 370.19'348'0973 88-3866
ISBN 0-931050-33-2

Copies are available from the
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
3175 Princeton Pike
Lawrenceville, N.J. 08648

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION for the Advancement of Teaching acknowledges with appreciation the contributions of many people whose efforts and assistance made this report possible.

The texture and vividness of the report owe much to reports prepared after a series of on-site visits to urban schools throughout the country. During these visits, scores of students, instructors, principals, and administrators candidly shared with us their hopes and achievements and their frustrations and disappointments. They enriched our understanding. They also confirmed our belief that America's commitment to excellence in education will mean very little if it ignores the special needs and circumstances of large concentrations of children who grow and go to school in our urban centers.

To document the condition of urban schools, Gene Maeroff, a senior fellow at our Foundation, visited schools in six American cities, observing conditions and procedures, and interviewing students, teachers, and principals. His reports deepened the human, true-to-life dimension of our research and helped to put these schools in national perspective. We acknowledge his contributions to this report with deep appreciation.

Drafts of the report were carefully reviewed and revised several times by small committees, panels of outside observers, and the full membership of The Board of Trustees of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The suggestions and criticisms provided in this process are significantly responsible for the quality of our final report. They are too numerous to mention individually, but on behalf of the Board of Trustees I want to express our profound appreciation for their assistance.

We also thank the members of our staff who devoted many hours to the preparation, review, and frequent revision of the drafts for this report. The quality of the text and composition of the document reflect only a small—though important—part of their commitment and contribution to the advancement of American education.

ERNEST L. BOYER
President
The Carnegie Foundation for
the Advancement of Teaching

PROLOGUE

A Generation Imperiled

WITHOUT GOOD SCHOOLS none of America's hopes can be fulfilled. The quality of our education will determine the strength of our democracy, the vitality of our economy, and the promise of our ideals. It is through the schools that this nation has chosen to pursue enlightened ends for all its people. And it is here that the battle for the future of America will be won or lost.

Since 1983, school reform has been at the top of the national agenda. Educators, governors, and even corporate leaders have played starring roles in this impressive drama. The curriculum was enriched, graduation standards rose, teacher salaries improved, certification procedures tightened, and pre-school education has received vigorous support.

We, as trustees of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, welcome this sustained push for school renewal. We applaud the progress. Still, we are deeply troubled that a reform movement launched to upgrade the education of *all* students is irrelevant to many children—largely black and Hispanic—in our urban schools. In almost every big city, dropout rates are high, morale is low, facilities often are old and unattractive, and school leadership is crippled by a web of regulations. There is, in short, a disturbing gap between reform rhetoric and results.

The failure to educate adequately urban children is a shortcoming of such magnitude that many people have simply written off city schools as little more than human storehouses to keep young people off the streets. We find it disgraceful that in the most affluent country in the world so many of our children are so poorly served.

There are exceptions, to be sure. In preparing this report Foundation representatives traveled to some of the nation's largest cities. We found outstanding principals who have turned failing schools around. One junior high school principal in New York City's South Bronx, for example, has built a reputation of excellence that even attracts recruiters from elite private high schools. In Los Angeles, a principal with vision has inspired both teachers and students to high levels of achievement.

We met gifted teachers who believe in students and conduct their classes with the expectation that learning will occur. In one sixth grade class, we found a group of thirty students eagerly discussing Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist.* They knew the good guys from the bad guys and were cheering for little Oliver who, like them, was trying to survive in a hostile climate. This teacher brought nineteenth century London to the classroom and related great literature to the realities of students' lives. Educators such as these are the unsung heroes of the nation.

But excellence in education ultimately must be judged by what happens to the least advantaged students. And, thus far, the harsh truth is that the reform movement has largely bypassed our most deeply troubled schools. Urban renewal has breathed fresh life into vast stretches of the nation's cities. Ramshackle structures have been razed, glass towers have risen, and city blocks have been beautified with plants, parks, and walking spaces. Cities have spacious convention centers, new hotels, and banks that look like great cathedrals. But what about the schools?

If urban America, regardless of its gleaming high rises and impressive skylines, is a place where education is neglected, then the glittering signs of "progress" remain a shameful facade.

One high school in Cleveland is near a once bustling intersection of commerce, but so many surrounding buildings have been razed that now the vacant land makes the school look like a forgotten outpost in an underdeveloped country. A sprawling playground is rendered useless by a carpet of glass. Inside, lavatories for students have no light bulbs, the stalls have

no doors and there is no toilet paper in the dispensers. There is an atmosphere of hopelessness among students, mirroring the outside world.

In Cleveland recently, only one public high school student was a semi-finalist in the National Merit Scholarship competition, out of the 15,000 so recognized nationwide. At a Chicago high school, only 10 percent of the entering tenth graders were able to read effectively. In New Orleans, the average high school senior was reading at a level exceeded by 80 percent of the students in the country. In a Houston elementary school, half the students had to repeat a grade because of unsatisfactory academic progress.

During school visits, we found that 75 percent of the high school freshmen in Chicago had reading test scores below the national average, and only five of that city's sixty-four public high schools had averages approaching national reading norms. Only 229 of the 1,918 students at one Los Angeles high school scored at grade level in reading.

A particularly sobering appraisal was offered by the City-wide Educational Coalition in Boston, which concluded: "Not only do 44 percent of [Boston's] high school students drop out before they reach 12th grade, but over 40 percent of those who do reach 12th grade score below the 30th percentile on a standardized reading test. They may graduate, but they are functionally illiterate."[1]

In New York City, at academic high schools geared to prepare students for college, we found that one out of every five students was absent on any given day. And in four of those schools, the absence rate approached one in three. "I made guest appearances when I was enrolled," said a student who transferred to an alternative high school. "The environment there was not one in which the kids wanted to learn. They just wanted to hang out on the streets."

There is, in fact, a widespread "culture of cutting" in many inner city schools. Evidence of this could be seen one Monday last spring in a high school where 11 of 28 students had shown up for a course called "High School Mathematics" and 7 of 18 for a biology course. Students selectively

skipped classes, most often those early in the morning, or at the end of the day. In Boston, a study of middle schools showed that the portion of students absent at least 15 percent of the time increased in 14 of the 22 schools in just one year.[2]

Such truancy is often a prelude to leaving school altogether. Each year almost 700,000 students call it quits, forming a group that exceeds the populations of all but the nation's largest cities. In New York, at least one of every three students drops out. At one high school in Los Angeles, because of their mobility and academic failure, seven out of ten students leave between the ninth and twelfth grades.

In large urban schools, we found an anonymity among students, an atmosphere in which young people are unknown and unsupported by adults. Teenagers in these schools are often socially unattached and feel unconnected to the larger world. For these students dropping out is easy. Alienated youth, for whom schools have barely made a difference, are flooding into communities where they confront unemployment lines, welfare checks, homelessness, and even jails.

Urban communities often are unsafe for children. They are places where the family is frequently a more troubled institution than the school. Poverty makes it difficult for parents, despite their caring and concern, to be helpful in their children's education. A startling 70 percent of teachers in urban schools say lack of parental support is a serious problem.

Thus, a devastating instability and divisiveness in cities undermines the effectiveness of schools. And America continues to face the very real possibility of the two separate societies envisioned by the Kerner Commission two decades ago. In its prophetic statement, the Commission warned of a social and economic division in the nation "so deep that it would be almost impossible to unite."[3]

Here then is our conclusion: America must confront, with urgency, the crisis in urban schools. Bold, aggressive action is needed now to avoid leaving a huge and growing segment of the nation's youth civically un-

prepared and economically unempowered. This nation must see the urban school crisis for what it is: a major failure of social policy, a piecemeal approach to a problem that requires a unified response.

Improving schools cannot solve all our problems. Still, public education is the key to bringing hope to children, renewal to our cities, and vitality to the nation. Therefore, in this report we propose a *comprehensive* program, one that puts together, as a single strategy, the best practices we observed. Specifically, our plan includes the following: commitment to educate *all* children, new governance procedures, an educational renewal program for the local school, and partnerships that link the school to a network of local, state, and federal support. Urban schools cannot do the job alone.

The first priority is to affirm that every student can succeed. While Americans talk of providing a quality education for all children, we found that many people, both in and out of schools, simply do not believe this objective can be reached. It is unacceptable to perpetuate a system in which failure is commonplace, or tolerate schools where so many students are passed along in a familiar pattern that divides the winners and the losers. This nation must reaffirm equality of opportunity unequivocally and give it meaning in every classroom. Students, even from the most difficult backgrounds, can academically and socially succeed. The goal must be quality for all.

- *Urban schools should have high expectations for all students, not just the most advantaged.*

The second priority for urban schools is to build an effective governance arrangement. In most cities, the school is viewed simply as one more administrative "unit" to be controlled rather than inspired. Principals are crippled by mindless regulations. Purchases, from pencils to window shades, to textbooks, are centralized, and in New York City, school cus-

todians, by contract, are answerable to no one but themselves. In such a climate, teachers and principals soon learn that conformity, not creativity, is rewarded. Educational leadership must be school-based.

But there is another side to the equation. Local schools also must be held accountable; they must demonstrate that effective learning has occurred. Current school assessment often makes a mockery of such evaluation. Principals and teachers are kept busy tracking routine procedures, not the educational *outcomes* of their efforts. Clearly defined standards for school performance are required.

Further, outside intervention should occur if educational objectives are not met. A failing school cannot be neglected any more than a health crisis or a national disaster can be ignored. We propose, therefore, a three-part plan to improve the governance of urban education:

- *The excessively centralized, bureaucratic control of urban schools must end. Effective local leadership is crucial. Every school should be given the freedom and flexibility required to respond creatively to its educational objectives and, above all, to meet the needs of students.*

- *School-based authority, while essential, is not sufficient. Each school must be held accountable for its work. State and district officials should set forth the criteria by which excellence will be determined, focusing especially on the educational performance of students.*

- *Intervention procedures also are required. If, after a reasonable period, the urban school fails to meet clearly defined objectives, officials should have the power to intervene. The range of such intervention should include professional consultation, new leadership, new educational arrangements, and the closing of the school.*

The third priority is to introduce at every school a comprehensive program of renewal. Educational success can, and does, occur in city schools and even in the most troubled urban pockets we found good practices that serve students well. But these effective, common-sense procedures—from early intervention, to smaller schools, to flexible scheduling arrangements—should not be introduced in piecemeal fashion. What urban schools now need is a comprehensive renewal program that embraces the following commitments:

- *Special emphasis should be given to preschool and early education. This means that, with government assistance, the nutritional and educational deficiencies of disadvantaged children must be overcome. It also means reorganizing the primary grades as a "basic school" and giving priority to the language development of each child.*

- *School size is crucial, too. All urban schools should be organized into small units—schools-within-schools—to make it possible for teachers to work together and overcome the sense of isolation felt by young people in the inner city. Every student should be well known and counseled by a caring mentor.*

- *Every urban school should have clearly defined goals and a curriculum that prepares students to meet their social and civic obligations, that introduces them to the world of work, and helps them relate activities of the classroom to the realities of their lives.*

- *The urban school should be flexible in its scheduling arrangements, offering, for example, work-study and weekend programs, an extended school year, five- and six-year diploma options, independent study, and early college entry. A program of coordinated services*

also is required to meet the educational, financial, and social needs of students.

- *Good facilities are essential. City schools must be places with good equipment and libraries for effective learning. Federal support is needed to permit the refurbishing of old buildings and the construction of new facilities so students can learn in safe, attractive settings.*

The fourth priority is to create a network of support beyond the school. In most cities, schools struggle to survive in a climate of neglect. They are cited in headlines for their failure but often are not given positive community support. State financing of urban schools frequently is insufficient, and federal leadership is lacking. It is not possible to have an island of excellence in a sea of indifference. Parents, college teachers and business leaders, as well as government officials at the state and national level, must be partners in renewal. The following cooperative arrangements are essential:

- *Parents should be involved in schools, consulting with teachers and monitoring the progress of their children.*

- *Libraries, churches and youth clubs, along with higher education, industry, and business, should provide a network of resources that enriches learning opportunities for urban students.*

- *Local and state government officials have primary responsibility for the fiscal health of public education. Their leadership, which has sustained so much of the current reform effort, should now focus on urban schools and greater equity in school financing is crucial.*

- *The federal government should provide both enlightened leadership and increased financial support for urban schools. Such leadership calls for a new National Urban Schools Program, one that focuses on child nutrition, early education, enrichment programs and better facilities for urban schools.*

The Carnegie Foundation, for more than 80 years, has committed itself to the improvement of American education. As its trustees, we conclude that saving urban schools is perhaps the most urgent educational challenge this nation confronts. Surely, it is the most critical issue the Foundation has addressed.

Sweeping improvements in urban schools can and must occur, but change will come only when the nation wills it. Therefore, we, the Trustees of the Carnegie Foundation, call upon America to commit itself to a crusade on behalf of urban education. The greater the delay the greater the cost. If our democracy is to endure, the nation cannot afford to wait.

1

The Mandate: Excellence for All

WE BEGIN with one essential declaration: an urban school will be successful only as teachers, administrators, and community leaders have confidence that all students can succeed. Different approaches to learning are required, but all students, regardless of background, should be given the tools and encouragement they need to be socially and economically empowered.

It is unacceptable that, year after year, about one out of every three urban students leaves school before completing the program or receiving a diploma. While the dropout rate among nonwhites has slowed, academic failure rates continue to be considerably higher for minority students than for whites. This gap persists precisely at a time when black and Hispanic students represent a growing proportion of the population.

During school visits we were struck by the frequency with which many students were described as "failures." While still in school they were, it seems, only marking time. It is significant, we believe, that 21 percent of today's teachers believe schools cannot expect to graduate more than 75 percent of those enrolled (Table I). Still more sobering, about 30 percent of urban high school teachers feel this way (Table II).

Teacher expectations vary dramatically from class to class. A social studies teacher in a Los Angeles high school confided somewhat sheepishly that her students were using a book written on a third-grade level because that was "all they could handle." "It's a game we play," said a teacher in Houston. "If we held them all back, the system would get clogged up. So we water down the curriculum and move them along."

At another high school, this one in Chicago, an English teacher told us, "the majority of students will try at the beginning of the year, but they get a few pages into the work and find that it's too hard. So they give up. The best of them, even though they can read the words, can't understand much beyond the basic plot and are unable to read for any kind of deeper meaning."

In an earth science class at a middle school in Houston, eighth graders spent a period examining samples of granite, looking at large crystals which the teacher said meant that the rock had cooled quickly. The workbooks open on their desks posed questions written on a fourth-grade level "so that the material would be understandable," according to the teacher. Some teachers we met predicted that half of their students would drop out of school within two years. What does this say about expectations?

A science teacher at a high school in New Orleans said that because students were weak in the basics, the chemistry course was "for the most part 'general science' under the rubric of chemistry." He said the content was "watered down and spoon fed." A Houston teacher of "Informal Geometry," assigned a problem in which students were asked to find a proof. Only two of 110 students in three classes solved the problem, making him wonder, he said, "whether youngsters are being taught in such a rote manner in the early

TABLE I

TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' PROSPECTS FOR GRADUATION

	Urban Schools	All Schools
Percentage of teachers who agree schools cannot expect to graduate more than 75 percent of all students	28	21

SOURCE: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, National Survey of School Teachers, 1987

TABLE II
TEACHERS' ROLES IN DECISION MAKING

Decisions Made	Percent of Teachers Reporting "No Control": Urban Schools	Other Schools
Setting Goals	17	6
Selecting Course Contents	29	14
Selecting Textbooks and Materials	36	12

SOURCE: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, National Survey of School Teachers, 1987.

grades that they are ill-equipped to work with concepts later on."

Urban students are often academically restricted by the curriculum itself which is divided between the academic, vocational, and general programs. But putting students into boxes can no longer be defended. To call some students "academic" and others "nonacademic" has a devastating impact on how teachers think about students and how students think about themselves. The message to some is, you are the intellectual leaders; you will go on to further education. To others it is: you are not academic. You are not smart enough to do this work. Students are divided between those who think and those who work, when, in fact, life for all of us is a blend of both.

Clearly there are schools that make a difference, places where expectations for all students are high. At Bret Harte in Los Angeles, all seventh graders are taught the same lesson in mathematics. They then break into 14 small groups and work at different levels, moving up as they demonstrate mastery of the material.

Locke High School, a large urban school, is pushing to raise the expectation levels of all students. It offers Advanced Placement courses in biology, chemistry, French, Latin, calculus, English and U.S. history. "We make a statement to students by offering all of the Advanced Placement courses,"

said the principal. "We want to keep the program going even if there is only one student to sign up."

Donald Perkins, a teacher at Clark High School in New Orleans, approaches his physical science course with the conviction that everyone is in the room to learn. Prior lack of success is not the issue even though it is a course for students who have failed before. He doesn't expect all students to become scientists, but he does believe that all of them must, and can, learn about the physical world around them.

Perkins is taking students through the vocabulary on the board: volcano, magma, cone, crater, lava, volcanic ash, volcanic eruptions. "Remember what we said about writing things down, it helps if the vocabulary becomes a part of you," Perkins advises. "What about ashes, cinders and bombs? Imagine a volcano erupting and giving off material. Even if you had never heard of volcanoes, do you think the bomb would be the biggest or the smallest particle?" He keeps rephrasing questions, walking among students, proceeding up one aisle and down another, seeking a response. "How large is a cinder?" Perkins asks, trying another approach. The questions from the teacher are gentle but relentless. "We talk of an extinct volcano; where else have you heard the word 'extinct'?" Students will come out of the class succeeding. The teacher has dedicated himself to that end.

Equality of opportunity, along with the support to make it real and not merely rhetorical, must be seen as the unfinished agenda for the nation's schools. To expand access without upgrading urban schools is simply to perpetuate discrimination in a more subtle form. But to push for excellence in ways that ignore the needs of less privileged students is to undermine the future of the nation. Clearly, equity and excellence cannot be divided. Unless we find ways to overcome the problem of failure in urban schools, generations of students will continue to be doomed to frustrating, unproductive lives. This nation cannot afford the price of wasted youth.

II

Governance: A New Structure

THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE of urban schools must be radically overhauled. Basic education policy should be shaped at state and district levels, but day-to-day decision-making should shift to the local school. Principals and teachers must be given more authority. They must be freed from a system of red tape that causes them to scrounge for chalk and paper clips while bombarding them with a steady flow of procedural directives.

But, granting more autonomy to the local school, while essential, is insufficient. Such authority must be accompanied by accountability and also by procedures for intervention in the event a school fails to educate its students.

SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP

During school visits, we heard the word *bureaucracy* used derisively, time and time again. We often found a nightmare of regulation and frustration. Government agencies impose on schools a tangled web of mandates that cover attendance quotas, requirements for graduation, teacher certification, the nature of state aid, the selection of textbooks, the structure of the curriculum and dozens of recordkeeping forms.

Principals and teachers, in many cities, are caught in a governmental system more preoccupied with paperwork, it seems, than with learning. While tight control by public agencies is rooted in the call for accountability,

the reality is that principals are often held responsible for the bureaucratic rather than the educational aspects of their work.

By mandating, in detail, how schools must be run, the professionalism of the staff is undermined and individual teachers are robbed of authority to act. Here is how one New York City principal described her situation:

> As I stare at the piles of memos and forms that confront me as a school principal, the job appears somewhere between a joke and an impossibility. The staff and I are directed instantly to implement new programs to resolve current social crises, to use the latest research on teaching, to tighten supervision, increase consultation, and to report back in detail on all the above. There are pages of new rules and regulations to study: It would take a few months to make sense of the Regents plan alone. Responding to it would take a lifetime. Meanwhile, finding the funds to buy paper, repair our single rented typewriter, fix a computer, or tune the piano requires most of my time and imagination.

Teachers in urban schools also have too little control over their work. They are three times as likely as their counterparts in non-urban districts to feel uninvolved in setting goals or selecting books and materials. They are twice as apt to feel they have no control over how classroom time is used or course content selected.

Paper work is a problem, too. As one teacher explained it:

> Paper work is one of the things that competes for my time. You have to check roll in homeroom and then you have to see if anyone is tardy. In second period, you have to fill out an attendance report that is audited for average daily attendance. You have to keep those records in your grade book. Then, if a student is absent three times you have to list him on a special form that goes to the principal with your lesson plans. And you have to call the student. On the fourth day, you have to send a letter

to the student's parents, and send another form into the office when the student is absent the sixth time. I think that is a lot of time that surely could come from some other source, like from the attendance office. It is an every period activity.

Urban high school teachers frequently have no permanent classroom, or even a desk of their own. They have no pleasant place to take a break or to lunch with colleagues. Even access to a telephone is limited. In some schools, floors are dirty, windows grimy, rest room facilities a disaster, and even teaching materials are in short supply. Here is how one teacher described it:

I sometimes wonder how we're able to teach at all. A lot of times there aren't enough textbooks to go around; the library here is totally inadequate; and the science teachers complain that the labs aren't equipped and are out-of-date. We're always running short on supplies. Last year we were out of mimeograph paper for a month, and once we even ran out of chalk. After a while you learn to be resourceful. But it's still frustrating to try to teach under these conditions. I mean, talk about teaching the basics! We don't even have the basics to teach with.

In the most troubled schools, teachers, with good reason, do not feel safe in the halls, in the parking lots, or even in the classrooms. Violence levels are high and assaults against teachers are not uncommon. A Carnegie Foundation poll of teachers nationwide revealed that over half the teachers in urban schools consider vandalism and disruptive class behavior a problem in their school (See Table VI).

Every school should have not only high expectations for academic achievement but high expectations for conduct, too. Standards of discipline must be consistently and sensitively enforced throughout the school. Education and civility are linked.

Further, the working conditions for teachers must improve. This nation cannot expect teachers to exhibit a high degree of professional competence when they are accorded a low degree of professional support. Nor can we attract the most thoughtful and intellectually capable students into teaching when, for twelve years, they have observed first-hand the frustrations and petty humiliations that many teachers must endure.

Here again, school-based management is the key. Principals and teachers--those closest to the students--should be given more authority to run the schools and the confidence between teachers, principals, and district and state education leaders must be strengthened. Our national survey revealed that the majority of teachers give good marks to their principals. However, this support is less strong in urban schools where teachers are more likely to rate the principal "below average" in supporting their work and communicating with them (Table III).

TABLE III

TEACHERS' RATING OF THE PERFORMANCE OF PRINCIPALS

	Percent of Teachers Responding Principal's Performance is "Below Average"	
	Urban Schools	Other Schools
Support for teachers	40	32
Treatment of teachers as partners	51	46
Communication with teachers	52	45
Openness to suggestions	54	43
Eliminating red tape	54	43

SOURCE: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, National Survey of School Teachers, 1987.

Even as we focus on the importance of the local schools, however, we acknowledge the key role of the central office and those who must coordinate the work of a complicated system.

Thus, we found it especially disturbing that only 18 percent of urban school teachers rank state and local education officials "above average." We recognize that issues of financing and equity, as well as court mandates, have placed heavy burdens on the central administration of urban schools. But boards and superintendents must think of themselves primarily as providing services and resources to enable teachers and principals and parents to be successful. Among the fundamental responsibilities of the school board, we emphasize three:

Finances: *The district board should obtain—from local, state and federal sources—adequate financial support for schools and make resources available in ways that are minimally restrictive.*

Personnel: *The school board should ensure that the ablest and best qualified people are employed to lead and teach in the system's schools. This must begin with the selection of a thoughtful and knowledgeable superintendent.*

Coordination: *The school board should build a bridge between the school and those groups and agencies, including state and local governments, that seek to enrich school programs, doing so with due regard for both the integrity of the individual school and the legitimate expectations of those beyond its walls.*

How can school leadership be strengthened? We recommend that the principal and teachers at each school have authority to allocate funds within guidelines set by the district office. Further, the district should provide each principal with a discretionary school improvement grant for program materials, special seminars, and staff retreats. One principal reported that he

had $40.00 in discretionary money to pay for refreshments at faculty meetings. And that, he said, was "profit from the Coke machine."

We also recommend that the principal, acting in consultation with colleagues, be given responsibility for the final selection of teachers for the school. School boards and unions must be willing to set aside some of their controls over school assignments to make this work. In too many schools, principals are not consulted when the district decides which teachers should be assigned to which school. "I have no control anymore," said an urban principal. "We have had five weeks of school, and already fifteen new teachers have come in—and fifteen have left because of 'bumpings'—teachers with seniority remove other teachers. In addition, each year, mostly through inheritance from somewhere else, I get three to five inept teachers."

We agree with John Goodlad who said, "There is no educating of young people in the school 'system'; it takes place in tens of thousands of individual schools. Reconstruction must take place then in each of these schools. . . Any overhaul of the system must be directed to increasing its ability to provide services to each local school."[1]

ACCOUNTABILITY: A SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The debate about governance, in many cities, is whether to "centralize" or "decentralize" the public schools. On the one hand, tight district control promises accountability, but risks rigidity in a faceless system. On the other hand, granting autonomy offers the possibility of community participation, but with the risk that, without oversight, such freedom might be abused. Since governing boards often cannot agree on educational outcomes, they attempt to achieve accountability and control through bureaucratic regulations, not educational results.

What is often missing in the "control-no control" debate is a careful consideration of the middle ground. Teachers and principals must be given greater freedom to make decisions. But school empowerment is only a

means to a larger end. The public deserves to see results. In calling for greater school authority, we acknowledge a parallel and absolutely essential need for evaluation.

We conclude that holding local schools accountable is perhaps the most important and least effective part of urban education. What is needed is a school report card, one that includes a wide range of measures to evaluate school goals and procedures as well as student progress. We recommend, therefore, that each school be asked to demonstrate, at regular intervals—perhaps on an annual or bi-annual basis—the educational effectiveness of its program. Such a strategy might include reports that respond to the following questions:

- *Does the school have clearly defined goals?*

- *Does the school evaluate the language proficiency of each student? What evidence is there that students are developing their ability to communicate in both the written and spoken word?*

- *What are the number and types of books being read by students?*

- *Does the school have a core curriculum for all students? What is the general knowledge of students in such fields as history, geography, science, mathematics, literature, and the arts? Is such knowledge appropriately assessed?*

- *What is the enrollment pattern among the various educational programs at the school? Specifically, what is the distribution between remedial and academic courses?*

- *Is the school organized into small units to overcome anonymity among students and provide a close relationship between each student and a mentor?*

- *Are there flexible scheduling arrangements at the school?*

- *Is there a program that encourages students to take responsibility for helping each other learn and helps make the school a friendly and orderly place? How well is it succeeding?*

- *What teaching innovations have been introduced during the preceding academic year? Are there programs to reward teachers who exercise leadership?*

- *Does the school have a well developed plan of renewal for teachers and administrators?*

- *Is the school clean, attractive, and well equipped? Does it have adequate learning resources such as computers and a basic library? Can the school document that these resources are used by students and teachers to support effective learning?*

- *Are parents active in the school and kept informed about the progress of their children? Are there parent consultation sessions? How many parents participate in such programs?*

- *Does the school have connections with community institutions and outside agencies to enrich the learning possibilities of students?*

- *What are daily attendance and graduation rates at the school?*

- *What changes have occurred in the drop-out rate and in students seeking postsecondary education and in getting jobs after graduation? What is being done to improve performance in these areas?*

What we envision is an evaluation program in which the school systematically collects information and reports on *student and school progress*,

not simply on *institutional procedures*. There is both input *and* output in the assessment, with a focus not just on means, but ends. For the school, the emphasis should be on a well-planned program, with flexibility, and a climate that supports a community of learning. For the student, the focus should be on language skills, acquisition of general knowledge, and on the capacity to think clearly and integrate ideas. Attention also should be given to the books the students read, the service activities they perform, and the uses they make of resources in the school and beyond.

The school report card we propose would be submitted to the district office and the state. Such reports should be accompanied by an overall evaluation prepared by the principal, teachers and parents who identify improvements as well as problems. A judgment of progress, or lack of progress, should be made—not against some arbitrary standard—but against the school's own performance in preceding years. Further, when the report card is submitted, the school should also set priorities for the subsequent year.

A STRATEGY FOR INTERVENTION

We support the integrity of the local school. We urge that principals be allowed to lead. We call for the empowerment of teachers, and we propose a report card on the school for the purposes of accountability. But even these are insufficient. If the school, after a reasonable period, is not able to provide evidence of quality education for its students, if the accountability reports do not reveal satisfactory progress, there must be outside intervention.

During our visits we found schools where students have, for years, been deprived of a proper education, where young people are passed along from grade to grade without evidence of academic progress. The schools are underfunded, morale is low and facilities are decaying. The high dropout rate persists year after year. It is our deep conviction that when schools fail,

swift changes must be made. No other crisis—a flood, a health epidemic, a garbage strike or even snow removal—would be as calmly accepted without full-scale emergency intervention.

Therefore, we propose that the state and local district be authorized to appoint a School Evaluation Team, made up of education officials, along with parents, teachers, and college faculty members, to review a school where unsatisfactory progress is reported. The evaluation team, in its assessment, would have access to school records in addition to the official report. On-site visits would be scheduled. Team members would observe classes and conduct interviews with the principal, teachers, students, and parents.

Upon completion of its site visit, the evaluation team would identify strengths and weaknesses and prepare a specific plan for school improvement. It would outline steps that the state, the district board, and the local school should take. A range of options would be available.

- *First, the evaluation team might outline a list of emergency steps to be taken by the school itself with the understanding that another mid-year assessment would be scheduled.*

- *Second, the team could recommend a continuing review arrangement, citing problems that bear watching. Under this procedure, on-site consultation would be provided by a senior advisor who would spend time working with teachers, counselors, and administrators. An analog for this person might be the "School Inspector" in the English system who plays the role of prodder, coach, and advocate.*

- *Third, the evaluation team might also conclude that the school was failing because of a fiscal crisis. It could then recommend that a special state fund be established to provide emergency aid to the school, proposing also how the additional resources should be spent.*

- *Fourth, the team might conclude that poor leadership is the problem. In this case, it may well recommend removing the principal. This means that the practice of tenure for principals should be ended. Principals should continue in office only so long as they are able effectively to lead the school.*

- *Finally, the problems may be so great and so intractable that the school, as organized, cannot be improved. In such a case, the evaluation committee could recommend closing the school, providing new educational arrangements for the students. This would be a strategy of last resort.*

The Department of Education in California has introduced a statewide plan of assessment in secondary schools that parallels in some respects our suggested review process. The California plan—a joint review conducted by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the State Department of Education—has three goals: to assure that the curriculum meets established criteria for quality; to assist students in high schools in meeting requirements for graduation and postsecondary admissions; and to provide an opportunity for professional growth. A main feature of the California assessment is the assigning of specialists, one for each academic subject area, to consult with the teachers on professional development and to help in the preparation of the self-study.

Other states are now considering ways to measure school performance and, if necessary, to intervene. Eight states have proposed or enacted legislation dealing with "academic bankruptcy" or "failed" districts. They are Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, South Carolina, and Texas.[2] While the results of this legislation are largely untested, each state has called upon local districts to undergo periodic evaluation relating to such "input" measures as fiscal resources, numbers of library books and programs; organizational, pedagogical, and curricular

practices; and "output" measures ranging from academic achievement to attendance and dropout rates.

The intervention methods in these plans involve restructuring the districts, withholding funds, or firing the superintendent. The National Governors Association is now developing new models of school structuring to assure that there will be quality schools for all students.

Again, local school control is crucial, but it is insufficient. In the end, students must be served and there may be times when the school, for whatever reason, is unable to provide the conditions for effective education. In such circumstances, public officials have both a legal and moral obligation to intervene.

III

Excellence: Priorities for Renewal

HIGH EXPECTATIONS and good governance are the first steps in renewal; but the final test is what happens within the school itself. During our visits, we saw, in all too many cases, a fragmented approach to school improvement. We found isolated examples of good practices, but there was no overall design. We conclude that the time has come for a comprehensive program of renewal to be introduced in every school in every city. The exceptional example of excellence must become the rule.

In this chapter, we set forth a five-part plan for school renewal. We suggest that every school give priority to the early years; have a clearly defined curriculum; be flexible in its scheduling arrangements; provide a program of coordinated services; and be a safe, attractive place with good equipment and adequate resources for learning. The program we propose also calls for partnerships and additional state and federal support.

THE EARLY YEARS: A GOOD BEGINNING

Poverty and schooling are connected, and a student's poor educational performance may relate to events that precede schooling—and even birth itself. The growing fetus requires a diet rich in protein, vitamins, and minerals. And yet, most mothers in poverty do not have adequate nutrition. Further, the human brain grows most rapidly during the first year of life. But for more than 20 percent of America's children, undernourishment is common. Malnutrition affects almost a half-million children in this nation.

A report by the Physicians Task Force on Hunger in America at Harvard University's School of Public Health revealed that the child, deprived of adequate nutrition during critical years of brain growth, risks "cognitive deficits" that restrict learning later on. In a Louisiana study, poor children who received supplements were compared to those who had been nutritionally denied. The children receiving good nutrition had a higher IQ, higher attention span, and higher grades in school.[1]

We realize that to talk about babies and poor health may appear to be far off the school reform agenda. Yet, the evidence is overwhelming. Educational problems cannot be divorced from poverty in the inner city. Poor health in the early years inhibits the physical and intellectual growth of children. It affects their ability to succeed in school. Mothers and young children must have good nutrition if good education is our goal.

Most urban teachers understand how learning is crippled if children are nutritionally or emotionally deprived. About 40 percent of the urban secondary school teachers we surveyed said neglected children are a problem. Thirty-five percent of these teachers described poor nourishment as a serious matter, and nearly 30 percent say "poor health" among children is a problem (Table IV).

We conclude that federal child nutrition programs should be more adequately funded. Further, community health projects should be established with public and private funding to provide support and early intervention for poor mothers and their children. In Chicago, every pregnant woman who resides in one of the four buildings of the Robert Taylor Homes, a public housing project, is invited to join a program funded by government and private sources. From pregnancy to their child's first year of school, mothers are given advice, as well as assistance with nutrition, health, and early education.

Another point of great concern: many poor children are not educationally stimulated in the early years or introduced to the richness of language. "Kids grow up with little interest in school," said Everett J. Williams, the school superintendent in New Orleans. "They come to school not able to count to

ten, not knowing their colors, not knowing where they live, and some not even knowing their names. At the beginning of their careers in school they are already students at risk."

We conclude that every eligible child should receive the benefit of Head Start or an alternative preschool program. Head Start, which today serves fewer than 20 percent of those eligible, has proven to be especially successful in helping children overcome many social, health, nutritional, and learning difficulties in the early years. Specifically, we propose an annual incremental expansion of Head Start so the program can serve all eligible children before the year 2000. We also strongly recommend that funding for Chapter One of the *Education Consolidation and Improvement Act* be increased at least 5 percent each year until all of the nation's eligible children are served. These federal programs have demonstrated their value in offsetting the educational disadvantages of poor children. The investment we propose is small when compared with the cost of wasted lives.

This brings us to the school itself, where priority in the early years should be on helping each child become proficient in the written and the spoken word. Specifically, we recommend that the early years—kindergarten through grade 4—be reorganized into an ungraded *Basic School.* Such a school, with relatively small classes, would give priority to language. The goal would be to assure that every child completing the basic school could read with understanding, write with clarity, and effectively speak and listen. Children of different ages and achievement levels would be in classes together. Each student could work at his or her own performance level.

Children in the Basic School would, from the first, be speaking, writing, reading, and talking about words, listening to stories, become linguistically empowered in an environment that the foreign language people like to call the "saturation method." No child should leave fourth grade without good command of English.

An increasing number of urban children come from non-English speaking homes. It is estimated that the parents of about 10 percent of the nation's students do not speak English. One such child we saw in a Houston fifth

TABLE IV

TEACHERS' REPORTS ON STUDENTS' HEALTH

Conditions Reported	Percent of Teachers Agreeing Child Health and Neglect are a Problem	
	Urban Teachers	Other Teachers
Abused/Neglected Children	41	36
Undernourished Children	25	13
Poor Health Among Children	29	16

SOURCE: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, National Survey of School Teachers, 1987.

grade class had left Mexico just five months earlier. The student spoke almost no English and gave little indication of understanding the language in the regular class to which he was assigned. "A shocking proportion of this generation of Hispanic young people is being wasted," warned a report by the Hispanic Policy Development Project. "Wasted because their educational needs are neither understood nor met, their high aspirations unrecognized, their promising potential stunted."[2]

The issue of how best to teach non-English speaking students is mired in the debate over bilingual education—a conflict that often has as much to do with politics as education. Advocates defend bilingual programs as the only way to be certain that students can keep up in their studies and maintain a positive view of their heritage while learning English; critics argue that the programs undermine the child's need for proficiency in English.

Research suggests that bilingual education succeeds in schools that are themselves effective. Typically, programs that fail are in schools that are ineffective in curriculum, classroom conditions, and social environment. In other words, good bilingual education, like every other kind of education, depends on clear goals and quality instruction.

In summary, a good foundation should be provided for every child. Such

a program begins with attention to health needs by the family and agencies beyond the school. It includes Head Start or a similar preschool program and then enrolls the student in a Basic School with priority on language. Where possible, parents should be involved every step along the way.

SMALL SCHOOLS: A SENSE OF BELONGING

Most city schools are too big, and anonymity among students is a pervasive problem. There is a feeling of isolation among teenagers at the very time their need for belonging is most intense. Harold Howe II, former United States Commissioner of Education, spoke powerfully about the problem when he called today's youth "an island in our society." Adults tell young people to "sit quietly, behave yourselves, and study hard in the schools we provide as a holding pen until we are ready to accept you into the adult world."[3]

Today, thousands of students, especially those in the upper grades, crowd into dilapidated buildings and drift unrecognized from class to class. There is a disturbing climate of impersonality in the urban school, a feeling among students of being unknown, unwanted, and unconnected to the world. Young people are cut off from the community and have few significant relationships with adults. They are not linked to a teacher who knows them on a personal level.

Many teachers who may be responsible for as many as 150 students every day are unable to monitor student progress at anything more than a superficial level. A student in a high school in Chicago spoke for many when he said, "School is a big place where nobody really cares about you and you do what you do to get by. Just like on the streets."

This rootlessness is exacerbated by families that move from place to place. There is, for the children, little continuity to education. A high school in Los Angeles that began the school year with an enrollment of

school in Los Angeles that began the school year with an enrollment of 2,028, had 1,790 students enter and withdraw during the academic year--a chaotic whirlwind that kept students faceless and unknown. A counselor at an intermediate school in Houston said it was not unusual, after a student had transferred into the school, for the child already to have transferred *out* by the time the records from the last school arrived. One Houston high school student said, "Why bother going to school? They don't care, why should I?" In Los Angeles another student said, "Nobody here really knows me. It doesn't matter how I do." In such a climate it is easy to "drop out" because no one even noticed that they had, in fact, "dropped in." Students know they can leave and not be missed.

The successful schools we visited were true communities of learning, places where students are known and have ongoing contact with their teachers. They belong. Therefore, we conclude that large schools should be divided into clusters with no more than 450 students each so that all students can be well known to each other, and to teachers. For example, a large school could have separate "schools-within-schools," with one on each floor or wing of the building. Every small school unit should have its own director and counselors who work with students and its own team of teachers assigned exclusively to that one cluster. Each unit would build its own traditions and sense of community.

Some old, unsafe schools should be closed, and smaller facilities should be leased or built. These new facilities could easily be located in residential or commercial buildings close to where students live or parents work. A new network of dispersed, "cluster schools" would have the added advantage of bringing young people more frequently into contact with adults. The goal must be to have within each urban school—regardless of its location and physical arrangement—a spirit of community, with a sense of bonding so that anonymity is overcome. "To improve people, one needs to know them," Theodore Sizer wrote in his critique on high schools in America.[4]

Satellite Academy, a public school, operates at four sites in New York City, with an enrollment of fewer than 200 students at each. Almost all of the students at this school had dropped out, were kicked out, or transferred in. At Chambers Academy, one of the Satellite campuses, the faculty consists of only 11 teachers, all of whom know the students well. Students usually have the same teacher for several different courses, and each teacher spends three hours each week with 20 students in advisory sessions.

Courses at Chambers Academy are run on a contract system. Students are involved in deciding how much tardiness and how many absences are acceptable, as well as the amount of homework to be completed and how test scores and class participation will figure in final grades. Students also subscribe to a school policy that prohibits violence, graffiti, theft, and drugs. Students described their school as "a family." "There is a community here," said a young woman who had attended several high schools where she frequently cut classes before coming to Chambers. "The teachers are like mentors and you want to succeed here and not just pass and get out."

At McDonough 35 High School in New Orleans, a caring environment was created by an inspired principal and dedicated teachers. Academic achievement is honored and the school is united behind a wide range of extracurricular activities, rivaling the best suburban schools. "This is a school where older students voluntarily adopt freshmen and take them under their wing," said a senior who was a cheerleader, a member of the speech team, and an honor student. She added, "Not only are academics hard here, but social life flourishes. We've been taught to make a lot of our opportunities and we're going to make it wherever we go."

Bret Harte Intermediate School in Los Angeles has worked to overcome anonymity with an approach that retains the intimate climate of an elementary school. Students in the sixth and seventh grades are not sent to separate teachers for each subject. Instead, teams of two teachers, sharing two classrooms, teach all the subjects and build close rapport with students.

There are two separate homeroom periods a day, in the morning and afternoon, so that group contacts can be enhanced.

Fremont High School in Los Angeles—which had a 60 percent dropout rate—introduced an "adopt-a-student" program for 125 of its pupils considered most at risk. Counselors, teachers and other adults became surrogate parents to the students, helping them with homework, and rewarding them with field trips. And, as a result, only 4 of the 125 dropped out.

Orr High School in Chicago combatted alienation by creating "houses," and at Theodore Roosevelt High School in the Bronx, clusters of about 275 students were formed in connection with its Dropout Prevention Program. Members of a "cluster" were unified by a common curricular interest or a common background. Each unit has its own coordinator, guidance counselor, and one or two family workers. Clusters have their own newsletters, assemblies, and student-run disciplinary procedures. A 16-year-old ninth grader who volunteered for a cluster after cutting school 20 times during the first semester, said his attendance improved markedly in the smaller group. "I like it better because the teachers are more into my life and more concerned about me," he said.

Overcoming anonymity—creating a setting in which every student is known personally by an adult—is one of the most compelling obligations urban schools confront. Young people who have few constructive relationships with adults need a sense of belonging. They need positive encounters with older people who serve as mentors and role models for both educational and social growth. Building community must be a top priority if students in urban schools are to academically and socially succeed.

THE CORE CURRICULUM: COHERENCE AND CONNECTIONS

Students in the inner city, just as students elsewhere, should become proficient in English, have a broad, general education, and develop the ability to

observe, weigh evidence, organize their thoughts, reach conclusions, and use knowledge wisely. To expect less is to underestimate the capacity of disadvantaged students and diminish their prospects for success. Further, students who do not have these important abilities and skills cannot reach their full potential, personally, socially, or economically. They will be unable to find satisfying work or participate in building their communities and the nation.

Too many urban students are just marking time, unable to see schooling as related to their lives. While living in the nation's largest and most dynamic cities, they are, paradoxically, cut off from the mainstream of American life and see little connection between the classroom and the reality of their world. They do not understand how the work they are asked to do in school will help them cope today or be successful tomorrow. Urban students rarely come in contact with anyone other than low-achieving peers and frequently do not have a realistic view of their own academic performance or potential.

"I don't think I'm having too much trouble with reading," said a girl at a high school in New Orleans who was in the 10th grade and actually reads at about the third grade level. At a Los Angeles high school, an 11th grader in an arithmetic course called *High School Mathematics*, said: "I'll need this more than I'll need geometry and algebra and it'll help me more in life." He then went on to say, "I want to be an architect." He had no understanding of the field he wanted to pursue.

We are suggesting, quite simply, that inner city students must be no less informed and no less richly educated than their counterparts in the suburbs. And yet we found that, in many urban schools, peer pressure against academic achievement is strong, especially among young males. "The fact that I like to read makes me exceptional at this school," said a sophomore we talked to in New Orleans. "Other kids don't want to read and their parents don't make them study. Some of them seem jealous of me because I spend a lot of time in the school library."

If urban high schools are to educate their students adequately, curriculum priorities must be set. If a school district is incapable of describing clearly the things it wants its graduates to know, if teachers cannot help students become proficient in language, learn about the world around them, and see relationships beyond those which are only personal, then each new generation will remain dangerously ignorant, and the capacity of its members to live confidently and responsibly will be diminished.

What, then, do we see as the basic curriculum for all students? Broadly defined, we propose a core of study based on those consequential ideas, experiences, and traditions common to all by virtue of our membership in the human family at a particular moment in history. These shared experiences include: written, verbal, and computational language; a heritage that reveals who we are and how we evolved; memberships in groups and institutions; an interdependent relationship to nature; the need for health and well-being; the urge to be creative; and the expression of our deepest feelings through participation in the arts. These common experiences would be explored through studies in English, history, mathematics, science, and the arts.

Further, there is the related need to prepare students for productive work. With a high school diploma, job prospects are enhanced. But the vocational programs offered in urban schools–those most directly related to entry level employment and the promotion of constructive attitudes toward work–often disappointing. During our visits, we heard repeatedly that "voc-ed" is the place to send less capable students, those who are "able to work with their hands rather than their heads." One vocational teacher told us: "They [the counselors] are sending us kids who are not really interested and are failing in school, so they put them in the vocational classes to strengthen their needed credits."

Some vocational teachers have high aspirations for their students. One spoke movingly of his desire to have students "vocationally and academically" prepared. More frequently, however, we found low academic standards and a stigma attached to teaching "nonacademic students," many of whom were in vocational education programs.

We conclude that career-related courses have an important part to play in the curriculum of urban schools. They can be enriching and highly motivating for the students. What we would eliminate, however, is the tracking pattern that puts some students in what is thought of as a "nonacademic" program, one that reduces options and assumes "voc-ed" students need no further education. We would also eliminate the narrow "marketable" skills courses that have little intellectual substance and give students "hands-on" experience while denying them a decent education.

What then is appropriate vocational preparation? All students, in preparing for work, should have a command of English and a core of common learning, should develop good work habits, be introduced to job options, and be counseled regarding career choices. Extensive job training should occur in postsecondary education or in the work place under apprenticeship arrangements. Thus, the challenge for urban schools is not to lower educational expectations. The vocational and academic programs should have meaning and make a connection between the curriculum, the student's interest, and life beyond the classroom.

One of the more successful efforts to achieve this aim is the so-called magnet school. Whether it is health careers, performing arts, business education or the humanities, students—through a magnet school—get an opportunity to link classroom experiences to their interests. Magnet schools have resulted in improved academic achievement, higher attendance, and lower dropout rates.

Since many inner city students are not impressed by the long term payoff of education—going to college, getting a better job—there is a current move to give prizes for good performance. We applaud this practice, providing it does not trivialize learning or demean the enduring benefits of education. Recently, businessman Eugene Lang promised a free college education for all sixth graders in one Harlem school who continued to attend school and graduated. The key to Mr. Lang's success was not just the scholarship idea, but the quality of the relationship he, as a special counselor, established with those students. The payoff was both immediate *and* long term.

The Boston Compact, an organization of businesses, has promised jobs to all students who stay in school and graduate. In Los Angeles, there is a plan to guarantee jobs after graduation to students who maintain at least a C+ average and a 95 percent attendance record. The Cleveland public schools have a program to pay the college costs of students with high grades. Programs such as these give tangible evidence that success in school means success in life.

In the end, however, the rewards of learning are best found in the classroom, stirred by an inspiring teacher. At George Washington High in New York City, Robert Reilly's ability to enrich students was illustrated one morning as he prepared his English class for William Saroyan's *The Filipino and the Drunkard*. "What would you do," Reilly asks, "if you were on the street and saw two people start fighting," a familiar enough scenario to students in this drug-riddled, Washington Heights neighborhood. Reilly handed out papers with short descriptions of three street situations and asked the students to jot down how they would respond.

After giving them a few minutes to write, Reilly asked about their reaction to an encounter with a person lying on the street. "I see a lot of people like that who drink too much wine, so I'd walk over to see if he was breathing," Sondra says. "How close would you get? Would you touch him? How would you know whether he was breathing if you didn't touch him?" Reilly responds with questions, forcing Sondra to think about her response. And so it goes, Reilly moved about the room to ask each student for reactions, going to the blackboard to group the comments. He moved on to the second hypothetical situation, a woman ranting on the street, and a third, a fight on a moving subway car. Students were truly engaged, ready for Saroyan's story about bystanders who watched an altercation without getting involved.

Evangeline Perona, another gifted teacher, is like a conductor who views the members of her sixth grade class as the symphony. The score the teacher uses is the curriculum, and her goal is to get students to play their parts with

skill and confidence. A stick of chalk is the baton as Perona leads them, 35 students in all, through the lesson. In the hands of a less able teacher this ensemble could easily disintegrate and produce a more discordant sound.

The lesson this particular day at Henry W. Longfellow Elementary School on Cleveland's far east side was mathematics; Perona was having them check their homework. They took turns going to the blackboard to work the problems. "Tell the answer and how you solved it," she said. The emphasis is on comprehension and reasoning, just as it will be later in the day in reading. "I think there is a better answer," she said, rather than saying it is wrong.

Evangeline Perona's approach was traditional, and it worked. She ran the class with loving authority, and students responded, eagerly raising their hands to contribute. Children were treated with respect and responded with good behavior. The climate favored learning as the teacher walked the difficult line that kept order without oppression, stressed basics without ignoring thinking, and maintained high expectations without being insensitive to the children.

We believe that all students, not just those who are college bound, should complete a core of common learning. The curriculum should help students meet their social and civic obligations and also give them the tools they need for productive work and further education. While students tackle core courses in different ways, the basic content and purposes should be the same for all. No student should suddenly wake up to discover that, as an adult, he or she is ill-equipped to participate responsibly in life.

FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS: MORE TIME, MORE OPTIONS

Flexible calendar arrangements are essential. The school calendar and daily schedule, as now constituted, often do not mesh with student needs. During our study we found young people who planned to drop out of school, not

because they were failing, but because they had other obligations to fulfill. Students who may need to work part-time or care for a young baby are caught in a rigid lock step. An inflexible course sequence is squeezed into a predetermined block of time. But why cling to the anachronistic notion that high school must be completed in four years, particularly by those whose circumstances differ so greatly from the norm?

To achieve more flexibility we propose that the last two years of high school become a *Transition School*. The purpose is not to provide less academic content, but to arrange learning in a more manageable format. In the transition school, the daily class schedule would be more flexibly arranged. Class work could be stretched over five or six years. Students could scale down the number of courses they take, mixing work and study, possibly pursuing no courses for a semester without being considered a dropout.

The Transition School—with its attendant counseling and guidance—is, we believe, an idea whose time has come. It would give students the flexibility many of them need, particularly those whose lives are unsettled by the special demands of urban life. With a Transition School, networks of learning could be established outside the school, blending school with college study. And through seminars, students could focus on what they have learned outside the classroom.

During our study, we saw many programs in which students broke out of the rigid lock step and, as young adults, extended the campus, enriched their learning and combined schooling with other obligations. City-As-School is a New York City alternative program with hundreds of learning experiences throughout the community. Instead of attending classes in one building, students take "courses" that range from group meetings at a museum once a week to writing news reports for a local newspaper. At present, students spend 27 to 32 hours a week at one or more of the community learning centers. The figures say the school is working. Starting off with just 61 students, the school now has about 1,000 students. About 85 percent of them will graduate. Almost half of the graduates go to college.

Middle College High School in Queens operates a joint effort of La Guardia Community College and the New York Public Schools. Here, the transition is from school to higher education. Using college personnel and facilities, the school draws its enrollment from students who had college potential but who achieved below grade level in the junior high school years. Surrounded by college students whose background is similar to theirs, Middle College rotates classes with internships to give students a taste of the adult working world. Middle College High School has reduced dropout rates and an increasing number of its students are going on to college. The Ford Foundation is helping to create similar institutions in six other cities.

A recent report by the federal Office of Educational Research and Improvement's Urban Superintendents Network cites Philadelphia's High School Academies Program which has, since 1969, helped thousands of inner-city high school students to complete their education while learning career skills:

> The district works with business and industry to help provide youngsters in 10 high schools with a comprehensive educational program. Participants attend academic classes and are trained for careers in automotive mechanics, electronics, business, or health. The program also provides students with paid jobs after school and during the summer in the school's in-house factory or in industry and places students in full-time positions after graduation. From 1985 to 1987, the Academies Program nearly doubled its annual enrollment from 750 to 1,400. Almost all enrollees complete the program, and from 85 to 90 percent of those who do are placed in full-time jobs, enter the military, or continue their education.[5]

Cincinnati's Occupational Work Adjustment Program is a one-year program for 14- and 15-year-olds also described in the Urban Superintendents Network report, *Dealing with Dropouts*:

> These adolescents have failed to achieve with the regular curriculum, but they are thought to be capable of learning if presented with meaningful

materials. Participants work with an "occupational work adjustment" teacher for at least 80 minutes each day to receive work-related and individualized remedial instruction in math, reading, language arts, social studies, or science. They explore career possibilities, enroll in at least two academic classes each day, and also work either in school or in the private sector for at least 80 minutes each day.[6]

Bakersfield College in California is one of a growing number of community colleges offering what it calls "2 plus 2." It is an arrangement with nine high schools that allows students to begin vocational agriculture classes in the eleventh grade and to continue through two years of college. They earn an associate's degree and get the equivalent of four years of technical training. Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colorado, in another 2 plus 2 arrangement, works with three high schools to offer certificates in secretarial studies and construction technology. Collaboration such as this should be expanded.

Flexibility depends heavily on good counseling. The school is, for many urban youth, the one institution that provides stability in a disintegrating community and, by operating in close alliance with other social service and health agencies, the urban school can help at-risk students confront problems that go beyond the academic. We do not suggest that the school itself do everything. What we do say is that services for many urban youth are a confusing maze of competing jurisdictions. Clearly, coordination is required.

One of the best known models of coordinated services is a national project called *Cities in Schools*. This program has, for years, helped at risk students stay in school by good counseling and by helping them with jobs, health, and family problems. One successful Cities in Schools program is in Rich's Department Store in Atlanta, where a school is located in a busy commercial district that brings students in contact with adults and places to work.

Teen-age pregnancy and the general need for better health care for children who live in poverty are two of the most dramatic illustrations of how the social and educational needs of students interact. Pregnancy is, in fact, the primary reason young women leave school. More than a million teen-agers a year get pregnant and half of them, usually the poorest, have babies. And it is estimated that from 25 to 40 percent of the females who drop out are pregnant or already are mothers.

One young pregnant student we met was a 14-year-old in the sixth grade. "My education is important to me and I didn't want to become a dropout," she said. This young woman was enrolled at a special Houston public school attended exclusively by pregnant students. In one year, about 600 students rotate through the school; some 300 attend at any one time. Last year, almost two of every five girls enrolled at the special school were 15 or younger. Across the country, about 10,000 babies a year are born to children under the age of 15.[7]

The report *Dealing with Dropouts* describes Baltimore's Laurence G. Paquin School for pregnant teenagers. Paquin's 1,000 students, aged 11 to 20, receive personalized attention from teachers, guidance counselors, and social workers. In addition to strengthening academic skills, developing job skills, and building self-esteem, students also learn about prenatal care, human reproduction, and child care. An infant-toddler facility is an on-site resource. After about a six-month stay at Paquin, students usually return to their regular school.[8]

In New York City, there are child-care facilities for young mothers at 24 of the 110 high schools. At one of the high schools we visited in Cleveland, a day care center was located across the corridor from the main office. It is the first room a visitor sees upon entering the school. This spacious, carpeted room with 12 cribs usually receives 10 to 15 children a day, ranging in age from three months to three years. Mothers are expected to spend the day in classes.

TABLE V

TEACHERS' REPORTS ON SCHOOL CONDITIONS

	Percent of Teachers Reporting School Condition "A Problem"	
	Urban Schools	Other Schools
Condition of physical plant	46	35
Cleanliness	51	36
Heating	54	46
Cooling	71	65
Security	55	42

SOURCE: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, National Survey of School Teachers, 1987.

We conclude that greater flexibility in school scheduling is essential if at-risk students are to be well served. Urban schools also should coordinate services for their students. The system should serve the student, not the other way around.

GOOD FACILITIES: PLACES THAT WORK

We visited urban schools where peeling paint, cracked plaster, torn window shades, and broken furniture are so common no one even seems to notice. In New York, for example, we saw schools that were filthy because the budget allowed for sweeping the floors only every other day. And at one school, two drinking fountains were in working order for its 2,000 students. In another, translucent plastic has replaced window glass. Through these shatterproof windows that let in the light, students are given a view of the

outside world that cannot be brought into focus no matter how much they squint at the lopsided urban landscape.

We observed that George Washington High School—alma mater of Henry Kissinger, Jacob Javits, Kenneth Clark and William Schuman—had a biology laboratory that consisted of two tables for the teacher to demonstrate experiments. There were no laboratory benches for the students. Each time a microscope slide was prepared, it had to be passed through the flame of an alcohol lamp, posing a constant hazard. The school building was last painted 25 years ago.

At other schools, test tubes were broken and burners did not work. Dusty periodic table charts hung at odd angles on the walls. Text books were outdated. We found schools where the roofs leaked so badly that wastebaskets were used to catch the drips during rain storms. Students at Intermediate School 88 in Harlem walked around the charred remains of a fire that had occurred months before.

Half of New York City's 1,050 school buildings are at least 50 years old. The facilities are so dilapidated that the board of education said it would take $4.2 billion over the next 10 years to refurbish the physical plant. Nationally, it has been estimated that about $30 billion will be needed to refurbish public schools.

We were also disturbed by the neglect of libraries in many schools. And yet, in many inner city schools, funds are not available to purchase books and the library staff has been cut back or abolished all together. In many schools we visited, the library is used more as a detention center than for learning. Learning is enormously enhanced when students have books to read, library equipment that is up-to-date, and a setting where reading is encouraged.

Nationally, about half the teachers we surveyed rated the physical plant, security, and cleanliness at their school below average. In every category, these negative ratings were higher in urban schools than those in suburban and rural districts.

Another problem: many urban schools are often targets of vandalism, and an added burden is on those who would like to make the facilities a source of pride. Splattered by graffiti, windows shattered, and entrances padlocked in ways resembling prisons, inner-city schools frequently do not reflect a hopeful image. The general appearance speaks of an uncaring place.

The atmosphere of neglect reflects itself in the carelessness of students. In many urban classrooms, students routinely arrive after the bell has rung, slamming the door behind them, walking in front of the teacher, disrupting the lesson. "Five percent of the students here are very disruptive in class and take up so much of our time that the kids with legitimate academic problems suffer," said a department chairman at a large urban high school.

Maintaining discipline is, in fact, a major issue in large inner-city schools. Statistics tell the story. In New York City there were 1,629 assaults and 410 robberies in the 1,000 public schools in the 1985-1986 year. This marked a 19 percent improvement in safety over the previous year. "You can't even start thinking about achievement until you have a safe and secure environment for your students," said the principal of an elementary school in the tough South Side neighborhood of Chicago, where he saw as his first order of business the need to keep intruders out of the building.

In our national survey we found that urban teachers were twice as likely as other teachers to rate vandalism as a problem and four times as likely to rate racial discord as a problem. Urban teachers also were more concerned about violence, absenteeism, and student apathy. Interestingly, urban teachers were somewhat less concerned about alcohol abuse than were teachers in suburban and rural districts (Table VI).

A good building does not necessarily make a good school. But the tacit message of the physical indignities in many urban schools is not lost on students. It bespeaks neglect, and students' conduct seems simply an extension of the physical environment that surrounds them. City leaders who take pride in the office towers that house banks, hotels, and shops are

TABLE VI

TEACHER RATINGS OF DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS AT THEIR SCHOOLS

	Percent of Teachers Reporting Behavior "A Problem"	
	Urban Schools	Other Schools
Student apathy toward school	81	67
Absenteeism	78	51
Student turnover	58	25
Disruptive behavior in class	53	30
Drugs	53	48
Vandalism	52	26
Alcohol	51	56
Theft	48	23
Violence against students	32	9
Racial discord	19	5
Violence against teachers	13	3

SOURCE: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, National Survey of School Teachers, 1987.

content to send children to decaying buildings. Students cannot learn if there is chaos in the corridors and disruption in the classrooms. Teachers cannot be effective if they are physically threatened. But orderliness is only a means to a larger end, and the school will be tested, ultimately, by the degree to which the principal and teachers are empowered to make the school a safer place where learning can occur.

In the midst of overwhelming odds, we found heroes with both vision and determination. The principal of Locke High School on the edge of the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles refuses to yield to those who would debase his school. Fifteen times during the year, plantings were ripped from the huge

flower plots he had installed around the school and 15 times he had the plantings replaced. A squat cinder block wall near Locke's main entrance is a regular target for graffiti, and every time ugly scribbles appear the principal has a new coat of paint applied. The wire fence around the school is attacked by fence cutters almost every night and the following day the principal has new meshing woven into the fence. "We're going to be successful," he said of both his effort to keep up the building and grounds, and more importantly, his attempt to overcome the academic difficulties of the students. "We're going to break this cycle of despair. I believe that the future of this country starts right here, in Watts."

We conclude that urban schools must be refurbished and that learning resources--libraries and laboratories--must be provided for effective learning. But for this to be accomplished, federal leadership is required. It will be impossible for school districts to find the billion dollar budgets required to overhaul the buildings. We propose, therefore, a federally-financed *School Facilities Program* for the nation's urban schools. The Higher Education Facilities Act of the 1960s was responsible for providing facilities to house this country's major growth in college and university attendance after World War II. Further, our invaluable network of community colleges would not have been available without such legislation. Why isn't this a precedent for urban schools?

The School Facilities Program we propose would provide low interest loans for the renovation and construction of school buildings. Such funds would be linked to educational renewal. Thus, the federal funds would not only provide attractive, safe places for students, they also would encourage use of the decentralized school model, breaking large schools into smaller units and encouraging some schools to relocate. Specifically, we suggest that loans be available only to districts that agree to reorganize the school into small learning units. Further, such loans would be available only if states can assure existence of an efficient construction process that is unencumbered by bureaucratic stalls and political intervention.

Quality education does not require a luxurious setting, but neither can it be accomplished in a setting of neglect. A school should not place students in harm's way. It should be a place that is decent and safe where teachers and students can pursue excellence in the classroom.

IV

Partnerships: Support Beyond the School

WHETHER A SCHOOL succeeds or fails in its mission depends on the degree of support received from the community it serves, both locally and nationally. How we, as citizens, regard our urban schools determines the morale of the people who work in them and helps students gauge their expectations. In this section, we examine commitment to urban education as seen first from the home, then from college and the corporate community, and, finally, from the state government. Only by building a network of support beyond the school can urban schools improve.

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

"I don't believe the public really cares about what goes on in this school. Only 20 percent of our parents even come to open house. We send home progress reports, but few parents are concerned about their children's learning even when they are failing. The sad fact is that apathy is our biggest enemy." With these words one school principal highlighted one of the most formidable barriers to excellence—the distance between the parents and the school.

When the monthly meeting for parents was held at a junior high school in Los Angeles one day last spring, a dozen parents showed up. The school's enrollment is 1,100. At a high school in New Orleans, which, like others in the city, required parents to pick up their children's report cards, 70 percent of the cards remained unclaimed two months after the marking period ended.

A first grade teacher at an elementary school in Cleveland said of the problem: "You send notices home, there's no response. You ask parents to come to conferences, they don't come. You send homework home, you can see that parents aren't paying any attention to it. They aren't helping their kids."

We observed, time and time again, how important it is for parents to be involved in the education of their children. Schools, we conclude, have an obligation to view parents as co-teachers—not just as adults who sign report cards or show up for open house. And to the extent that schools can enlist parents in the search for improvement, the greater the potential for success. There is something very encouraging about the mother at an elementary school in Cleveland who frequently observes her daughter's class. "Why do you do this?" the teacher asked. "Because I was not very well educated, and it's the only way I can know enough about what my daughter is being taught to be able to help her at home," the mother said.

Farren Elementary School in Chicago has a special program of parent participation. The goal is to prepare parents for the General Equivalency Diploma, making the school as much a place for parents to grow as it is for children. "I want my six-year-old to go to college and I want to be a model for her," said Gwendolyn Thompson, a mother in the program. She continued: "the teachers are interested in these kids, but I don't think the parents are helping them. The school only has the children from 9 to 2:30 and that isn't long enough if their parents aren't interested in education."

We recognize that the ideal of the parent as teacher is enormously difficult to achieve when work and school schedules overlap and when parents have neither the time nor energy to focus on the school. Still, schools have the obligation to create a climate and a schedule that conveniently involves parents. Some urban schools we visited do have evening and weekend appointment time for parent consultations. Others have parent advisory committees that give parents an important voice in school practices. There should be more neighborhood meetings in which school people meet

with parents in homes, churches, or other convenient locations. Regardless of the structure, parents must feel empowered, confidently viewing the school as responsive to their interests and hopes for their children.

To strengthen the link between home and school we propose that parents spend at least one day each term with their child at school. To achieve this goal, employers need to get involved. Specifically, we recommend that parents be given released time from work to participate in teacher conferences. If society sees value in release from work to serve on juries and to vote, then surely allowing parents time periodically to visit their children's schools is in the public interest.

SCHOOL-COLLEGE CONNECTIONS

Urban schools also should maintain close contact with higher education. Links between the two sectors must be strengthened. Students, after all, arrive at college after having attended elementary and secondary schools. School teachers are trained on college campuses. And yet, in one city we visited, the campuses of two universities could be seen from the local high school. Even though the institutions were within easy walking distance from each other, the principal reported that the school lived in isolation. He said they had no programs of any sort involving either institution.

One strategy is for colleges to work with a network of junior high schools, focusing on high risk students. College students, faculty, and staff can form one-to-one relationships with urban youngsters. The personal bonds that result from a mentoring relationship can dispel the hopelessness that robs many urban youths of motivation, and help disadvantaged students complete successfully their academic programs.

We are intrigued by the plan of the Abel Foundation in Baltimore to work with seven agencies, including two higher education institutions, to assist students in the city's junior high schools. Each of the seven participating

agencies will be assigned 60 students for whom they are responsible for providing mentors.

Goucher College, one of the participating institutions, plans that each mentor will meet weekly with a junior high school student. Once a month, there will be a large gathering of the at risk students and their mentors. The college expects to provide a summer program for the junior high school students. Such an approach brings higher education and the schools to an essential face-to-face relationship.

Queens College of the City University of New York is coupled with the Louis Armstrong Middle School, in a nearby Queens neighborhood. The school, which has an ethnically balanced enrollment, has been so successful that it has more applicants than it can accommodate. An extensive web of programs involving teachers and students at both institutions has been woven together. Paul Longo, who oversees the efforts, has an office at each place, carrying the title of associate dean at the college and director of the Center for Education at the school.

Undergraduates from Queens College do their student teaching at Louis Armstrong, and college faculty develop curriculum projects for the school. Teachers at the school have library privileges at Queens college, and some teach on the college campus.[1]

Since this link was forged almost a decade ago, students and professors from Queens College have helped the school stay open with programs for the community until ten o'clock every evening, Monday through Thursday. More recently, college representatives have spent Saturday mornings at the school as well, conducting enrichment classes for students from a variety of area schools along with counseling sessions for their parents.

Milwaukee Area Technical College has joined forces with the city's public schools on Project Second Chance, which is designed to bring 16- to 18-year-old dropouts back into school. Returning students can take advantage of a range of alternative offerings at the college, including adult vocational courses, general education, rehabilitative and guidance services,

and career counseling. Also available are a variety of coordinated services made possible by partnerships between educational institutions, community and social agencies, and the criminal justice system. A job placement service at Milwaukee Area Technical College connects students to a network of potential employers.[2]

The College of Wooster is working with four Cleveland high schools to offer more opportunities for minority students. The Wooster-Cleveland Academic Enrichment Program in Science, Math, and Computer Science includes a Scholar-in-Residence Program, where college faculty teach for a week at participating high schools; scholarship support for students to attend math and science summer camps; and workshops involving scientific demonstrations and problem-solving held at Wooster for high school classes.

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) has an outreach program that links its students to the city's minority high school students and to professionals in the community. The program, initiated with Gannett Foundation funds, introduces tenth and eleventh graders to college life and, in the process, identifies potential candidates for admission to RIT.[3]

Meetings with working professionals provide advice and support for both the high school and college students, and participating adults and RIT students benefit from the community service experience. As reported in the *National Directory of School-College Partnerships* published recently by the American Association for Higher Education:

> The pairing of the students and the community professionals gets both groups involved in experiential activities. Students "shadow" professionals for a day, allowing them to become role models for the students. Visits to campus by the community professionals involve them in small group discussions with the students. This gives the professionals an opportunity to share their backgrounds, successes, and challenges. Community professionals may also sponsor off-campus activities, such as attending cultural events with the students.

Teacher recruitment is a special obligation of higher education. And priority should be given to attracting more blacks and Hispanics into the profession through scholarships. At a time when the needs for minority teachers are growing rapidly, minority teacher populations are declining. A crisis is unfolding. In addition, colleges should have summer and year-long institutes for teachers, following the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute model which asks the teachers themselves to shape the content of the program.

The jurisdictional boundaries separating schools and colleges are crossed successfully only when institutions on both sides of the line are amenable. It is not easy to build incentives for cooperation if one institution considers itself the winner and the other sees itself as the loser. In all of this, a special burden falls on higher education. The nation's colleges and universities must, in tangible ways, affirm the essentialness of the nation's urban schools.

Collaboration is not an automatic virtue. Not every cooperative venture is destined for success. But to those who make the effort and occasionally succeed, the rewards are high and students are well served. There can be no better reason for working together.

CORPORATE COLLABORATIONS

Industry and business must be partners, too. Traditionally, corporate America has stood aloof from public schools. While complaining about the quality of education, it has failed to get involved. Today, however, collaboration is increasing. But what, specifically, can business do to enrich public education?

First, businesses can work with students who are educationally disadvantaged. In Chicago, a natural gas firm, People's Energy, sends tutors to the schools. Twenty employees tutor students in reading and math at Tilden

High School for one and one-half hours twice weekly. In Houston the program that Tenneco first launched now sends twenty-five employees to primarily Hispanic inner-city schools, again providing tutorial help to students with language difficulties.

Hughes Tool in Houston sends Hispanic and Vietnamese workers to tutor high school students in the same ethnic groups. These tutors serve as role models, and place special emphasis on communication skills. In Los Angeles, Atlantic Richfield employees are given released time to tutor Hispanic students in English usage. Atlantic Richfield volunteers also counsel students with academic and personal problems.

Businesses also can help gifted students, especially in science and mathematics, and the new technologies. Shell Development, for example, sends high-level technical and computing staff to Houston's Jones High School Vanguard Program for the Gifted. When questioned about the program, a student remarked that the volunteers "stretch us beyond what the teacher can do." Similar reactions have been reported at Houston's Engineering High School, which is visited weekly by a team of engineers. A graduate, when asked who had had the greatest influence on his career choice, cited the IBM volunteer with whom he had worked in class for one year. The Oak Forest Bank, also of Houston, gives awards to students who demonstrate outstanding leadership qualities. A few programs provide summer scholarships for promising students. Bell Laboratories and other businesses provide sponsoring scholarships for college-bound students in fields of study related to their industries.

Advanced math students from Southwest High School in St. Louis travel to Monsanto, where engineers provide instruction in Fortran computer programming. Under the same program, biology students visit environmental labs and chemistry classes tour research and development laboratories at Monsanto.

Perhaps the most promising role for corporations is the renewal of the teacher. McDonnell-Douglas Corporation has opened its Employee Volun-

tary Improvement Program to the staff at nearby Central High School—at no charge. Under this program, high school administrators take management seminars and teachers take courses in computer science, algebra, and trigonometry. Moreover, the head of the business department at Central went through the McDonnell-Douglas Secretarial School and, as a result, made major changes in the curriculum to better prepare students for vocations.

Pittsburgh's Allegheny Conference on Community Development awards mini-grants to one hundred innovative teachers for proposed projects. A committee composed of representatives from the mayor's office, the superintendent of schools, the Urban League, and various corporations distributes grants to teachers totaling about $10,000. These grants can range from $50 to $1,000 each. Although they are small, they have encouraged teachers to pursue fresh instructional interests. They have been awarded for such creative projects as a course combining the teaching of art and geometry (now part of the school's elective curriculum) and an illustrated booklet describing how art objects can be created from industrial throw-aways.

Business also can help urban students take the step from school to work. Before the name *Adopt-a-School* came along, General Electric donated a $5 million plant for use by the Cleveland Board of Education. That facility, located in the heart of a high unemployment district, became the Woodland Job Center. Students at Woodland work on various assembly lines, and are paid for their work. Shop work is supplemented by a thorough sixteen-session orientation program presented by General Electric foremen. Many graduates of the program move on to jobs in the company's main plant.

Business and industry also can serve administrators, particularly by aiding principals in their capacities as both managers and leaders. As early as 1966, the Olin Winchester Group loaned management trouble shooters to New Haven schools for six months of consultation. That same year, Warren King and Associates evaluated the management of schools in Ohio and Oregon. Eighty firms participated. Teams of executives visited 200 schools

and made recommendations resulting in savings of over $100,000 each year. And several years ago, the city of Baltimore saved $700,000 in its school-bus operations by implementing changes proposed by business consultants.

Cooperation between industry and the schools yields a special profit. The pay-off cannot always be clearly measured in dollars and cents, but the chance to work with young people who may soon be employees; to help to instill in them a sense of responsibility and the excitement of discovery; to enrich the teachers; to give the principals support while at the same time enlarging the corporate vision by working for the betterment of society are among the returns some executives are already including on their companies' balance sheets. Rance Crain, editor-in-chief of Crain's *Chicago Business*, a financial weekly whose employees teach journalism at Carl Schurz High School, said that "in this case, self-interest is, in fact, for the good of all."

THE STATE: MEETING THE MANDATES

Constitutionally, responsibility for education in America resides in the states. In fulfilling this obligation, each state should establish the general standards by which the educational mission is to be accomplished. State education laws should answer a few basic questions: What is a school? Who must attend it, and until what age? What are the statewide requirements and standards for entering high school? What is the state prepared to pay for, and on what terms? What are the requirements for becoming a public school teacher in the state?

None of these questions needs a long answer. Indeed, we caution state education agencies (and their boards) against tedious regulations in the interpretation of the statutes. Academic requirements should be defined in terms of general skills and bodies of knowledge, not course labels, periods of time spent on a subject, or Carnegie units accumulated. The Education Commission of the States has developed model legislation that may be

especially helpful in drafting and revising the education laws. The fundamental goal must be the achievement of both quality and equality in the process.

If these twin objectives are to be met, greater equity in financing is critical. Today many inner city schools are starved for lack of funds while districts with less critical needs are well-financed. In the 1970s, a flurry of court cases gave promise of wiping out inequities in the funding of school districts. It appeared that, finally, the enormous differences in property wealth would no longer allow one school system to be well funded while others are impoverished. But that promise is sadly unfulfilled, and though adjustments have been made in some states, a child's place of residence can still determine the adequacy of his or her education.

A state with a relatively high per capita income that leaves support for the education of its children to the chance distribution of property values in local districts is selling its children short and failing to meet its obligations to the less fortunate.

In New Orleans, a city where most homeowners pay little to no property tax for education because of a system of low valuations and numerous exemptions, a high school we visited was shockingly deprived. Housed in a decrepit stucco structure erected in the 1920s, this school was so dated that the steps in the narrow wooden stairwells were worn concave by generations of feet. In some classes, dog-eared books were distributed, then collected after each session so they could be used by separate classes throughout the day. The scarcity of books made them unavailable to be taken home. Classes of more than 30 students were typical at this school. Physical education classes were conducted only with the dim sunlight that flowed through the windows of the gymnasium because there was no money to buy high-intensity bulbs.

Money alone will not make a better school. Still, it is foolish to suggest that money does not matter. Urban schools cannot be run only on good will and inspiration; they must have the tools to do the job.

We strongly urge that states fulfill their legal and moral obligations by achieving greater equity in the financing of urban schools. Once a standard of expenditures for effective schools is determined, the goal should be *at least* to meet that standard for *all* schools. Unless big city schools are given more support, much of what we propose in this report will remain a hollow promise.

V

A Nation Responds: The Urban Schools Program

THE ENTIRE COUNTRY has a stake in the future of our urban schools, and if the crisis is to be resolved, greater federal leadership is essential. When the nation is at risk, the nation must respond. Specifically, we propose a new *National Urban Schools Program.* Such a program—similar in spirit to the Rural Extension Act that was enacted years ago to help farmers—would make it unmistakably clear that the federal government intends to be a partner in addressing one of today's most compelling social problems—the renewal of urban schools. The National Urban Schools Program would pull together pieces of existing legislation and introduce carefully selected new projects:

- *First, we recommend that the funding of Head Start be incrementally increased so that all eligible children are served by the year 2000.*

- *Second, the appropriation for federal child nutrition programs should be increased.*

- *Third, we propose a 5 percent increase in the funding of Chapter One of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act each year until all children eligible are provided service. Further, Chapter One should continue to focus on basic skills, but the rigid*

regulations regarding the supplemental support provisions should be loosened.

- *Fourth, a new provision should be added to the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act to make it possible for parents living in poverty to place their children in afternoon and summer enrichment programs of their choice.*

- *Fifth, the National Urban Schools Program should contain a provision on teacher renewal, an updated version of the National Defense Education Act, to make summer fellowships available for teachers. This program also would expand the Christa McAuliffe Fellowship program and reinstitute the Teacher Center program, encouraging teacher teams at the local school to institute their own program of continuing education.*

- *Sixth, we propose an Urban School Facilities provision. Such legislation would make available to school districts low interest loans to demolish or refurbish old buildings and create more attractive, smaller units, or make it possible, where necessary, to relocate in residential or commercial buildings, or shopping centers. Loans also would be available to rebuild science laboratories and secure technology such as computers for more effective learning.*

- *Seventh, The National Urban Schools Program should have a school innovation provision, a fund that would encourage schools to introduce new curriculum or new scheduling arrangements.*

- *Finally, the new program should provide incentives for community colleges and four-year institutions in urban areas to maintain*

special relationships with schools, to enrich teachers, recruit minority students, train more minority teachers, and help schools in the design of flexible school models. In this sense, higher education would play a role in urban schools analogous to the land grant mission.

Most funds appropriated under the National Urban Schools Program would be spent in behalf of school districts serving the nation's 100 largest cities.* Recognizing that states without big cities also have urgent needs, we propose that 15 percent of the federal allocation of funds be set aside for students in these states whose pockets of disadvantaged children must also be served.

A comprehensive federal program such as the one we have just proposed would in no way signify a lessening of the belief that public education is primarily the responsibility of states and local districts. However, it would be a recognition of the enormity of the task and a declaration that a local, state and federal partnership is required. A federal government that can help localities build highways, provide for environmental protection, and construct hospitals surely can find a way to play a larger part in securing the future of urban education.

Everyone's future is imperiled if disadvantaged young people are not economically and civically prepared. So long as failure is accepted, the lives of millions of children clustered in our big city school systems will be blighted. But still more is at stake. If urban education continues to fail, frustration will result, prospects for renewal will decline, and the nation's future will be threatened.

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*Focusing the funds primarily on districts serving the 100 largest cities would guarantee that the money would go to the target population. The smallest of these cities is Worcester, Mass., with a population of 160,000. This would mean that districts in 36 states and the District of Columbia would be eligible for this new kind of aid.

What we offer in this report are not easy answers. Still, we are persuaded that students in our large cities can succeed if the nation's response is as urgent as the problem. We found, in every city, school administrators and teachers with a clear vision, high expectations, and dedication to the task. As a nation we must build on these heroic efforts and proceed, not only with urgency, but with confidence and hope.

NOTES

Information and statements that are not cited in the following notes were obtained during the 1987 school visits by a representative of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

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